

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-3, 7 and 8 were rejected, claims 4-6 were objected to by the Examiner, and claims 9-11, 17-21, 23-27 and 29 were allowed. Applicant thanks the Examiner for allowing claims 9-11, 17-21, 23-27 and 29 and for indicating the allowability of claims 4-6. Dependent claim 4 has been amended to incorporate the language of independent claim 1 from which it depends. Additionally, the dependency of claims 6, 7 and 8 has been amended such that each of those claims depends directly from newly independent claim 4. Accordingly, claims 4-8 should be in condition for allowance.

Claim 7 was objected to based on lack of proper antecedent basis for the recitation "the outer housing." Accordingly, claim 7 has been amended to replace the term "outer" with the term "motor" to provide proper antecedent basis.

Claims 1-3 and 7-8 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by the Carter reference, US Patent No.: 3,975,117. Independent claim 1 has been amended to clarify certain aspects of the invention, and the dependency of claims 7-8 has been changed such that those claims now depend from allowable claim 4.

The Carter reference discloses a motor driven, inducer-equipped, centrifugal pump. As stated in the Carter reference:

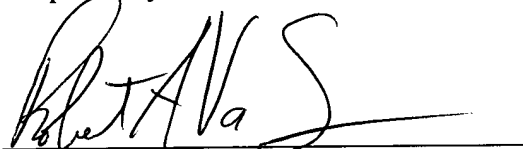
“Some of the fluid from the pumping chambers 27 will flow between the adjacent impellers and the overlying walls 83 of the members 82 into the chambers 86 which communicate with the bores 64 in the motor shaft 33 through the passages 66 and 87. This fluid is discharged from the motor shaft bore 64 through the passages 65 into the bottom of the motor housing 17 and can flood this motor housing to eventually leak through the bottom bearing 34 and bearing bushing 45 back to the inducer to merge with the incoming fluid impelled by the inducer and thus be recirculated back through the passage 24. Likewise, the bled-off fluid in the top of the motor housing 17 can flow through the bearing 47 and bushing 62 back to the first stage pump inlet 26 to merge with the fluid from the passages 25. In this manner, the motor compartment

is cooled and the bearings are lubricated." (See column 6, lines 1-17).

Thus, the Carter reference discloses a system in which lubricant is pumped to a location above certain bearings and allowed to flow or "leak" downwardly to the bearings. The reference does not disclose, teach or suggest the use of an internal lubricant pump extending around the entire circumference of a shaft for conducting lubricant "directly to the plurality of wear surfaces" as recited in amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, amended independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2 and 3 are patentable over the cited reference and should be in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing remarks, all pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner believes certain additional amendments are necessary to clarify the present claims, or if the Examiner wishes to resolve other issues by way of a telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. A. Van Someren', written over a horizontal line.

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